

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-29. (cancelled)

30. (New) A guide catheter having a distal end and a proximal end, the guide catheter comprising:

an inner lubricious layer extending from the distal end to the proximal end;

a reinforcement layer disposed over the inner lubricious layer and extending from the distal end to the proximal end; and

an outer polymer layer disposed over the reinforcement layer, the outer polymer layer including a proximal region, a distal region and a transition region disposed therebetween;

wherein the transition region has a flexibility that is different from a flexibility of the proximal region and is different from a flexibility of the distal region.

31. (New) The guide catheter of claim 30, wherein the transition region has a flex modulus different than a flex modulus of the proximal region.

32. (New) The guide catheter of claim 30, wherein the transition region has a flex modulus different than a flex modulus of the distal region.

33. (New) A method of providing a transition region in a guide catheter, the guide catheter including an inner layer and an outer layer, the guide catheter having a distal region, a proximal region and an intervening transition region, the method comprising steps of:

removing a portion of the outer layer proximate the transition region;

replacing the removed portion of the outer layer with a different polymer;

wherein the transition region has a resulting flex modulus that is different from that of the distal region and the proximal region.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein removing a portion of the outer layer comprises removing a band of material.

35. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein removing a portion of the outer layer comprises forming one or more annular grooves.

36. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein removing a portion of the outer layer comprises forming one or more longitudinal grooves.

37. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein replacing the removed material further comprises forming an atraumatic tip with the different polymer.

38. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the different polymer has a lower flex modulus than the material removed.

39. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the different polymer has a higher flex modulus than the material removed.